

A Parish Family ... Those Who Serve

A Rochester native who joined the Passionist Fathers and now is stationed at their monastery in Scranton, Pa., has been on loan to St. Patrick's for several months as a full-time assistant.

He is Father Michael Connor, CP., who was brought up in Immaculate Conception parish, Rochester, and went from the parish school to St. Andrew's. He entered the Passionist Seminary of the Holy Cross in Dunkirk in 1933, and was ordained to the priesthood 10 years later.

After a year of further training at St. Joseph's Monastery, Baltimore, he took to the road, conducting parish missions and retreats throughout the eastern United States and Canada. He was stationed in Toronto for 11 years before moving to Scranton.

Father Foster P. Rogers, assistant pastor of St. Patrick's, is involved particularly in religious education.

He was assigned to the Elmira parish in October, 1969, after service at Christ the King,



Left to right: Father Connor, Father Rogers, Mr. Cain, Miss Ganey

Rochester, and St. Christopher's, North Chili.

Born in Romulus, Father Rogers attended school there before entering St. Andrew's. He was graduated from St. Bernard's, and ordained, in 1966. He is the son of Mary Rogers and the late Ernest Rogers.

The first two pastors of St. Patrick's led their flock for 86 years, between them.

The Cains, father and son, have taken care of the property for 68 years.

J. Malachi Cain, supervisor of custodial services, took over from his father, John, in 1940. He keeps the church, rectory, convent, school and parish center clean, lighted and heated.

The man known as "Mally" to the innumerable parishioners who have passed through the

school in 31 years has four children of his own. They are Sister Marie Catherine, RSM., Mrs. Harold (Clara) De Renzo, Mrs. Paul (Mary Jo) Minch and John M. Cain, Jr.

Add to the stable employment record of St. Patrick's the secretary, Helen T. Ganey.

She has been working in the rectory office for almost 32 years, during the pastorates of

Fathers Brien, Waters, Hayes and Egan.

The "Voice of St. Patrick's" is credited with a memory programmed like a computer to set up anniversary Mass schedules. Recently she transcribed into new ledgers all the baptism records for the past 100 years.

On the side, Miss Ganey has held various offices in the Catholic Daughters of America and the Ladies of Charity and has been president of the parish Sodality of Our Lady.

History

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Batavia as teachers. The following June, the school graduated a class of seven — all girls. The class of '98 numbered 33, including 12 boys.

Chemung County was detached from the Buffalo Diocese and added to Bishop Bernard J. McQuaid's domain, and Father Bloomer spoke for his colleagues in promising their new bishop "hearty cooperation."

The occasion was recorded by the Gazette on Feb. 4, 1897. The priests "gathered at St. Bernard's Seminary on the Charlotte Boulevard," the paper said, "to partake of a dinner tendered by their bishop ... and to spend the afternoon in an informal social manner."

Father Francis E. McCrone, who administered the affairs of the parish for the six months following Msgr. Bloomer's death in 1932, had been an assistant from 1898 until 1911, when he was appointed to the pastorate at St. Patrick's, Owego.

In a Dec. 3, 1922, news story dealing with the Elmira parish, he was given singular notice. Noting that the property was debt-free, the Sunday Telegram spoke of improvements effected while Father McCrone was assistant pastor. The cost was \$18,000, and "to Father McCrone is due the credit of collecting the greater part of the money," the writer declared.

The first modern fund drive in which the parish was involved was the \$5½ million campaign for Catholic high schools — among them Notre Dame — that came in 1952. St. Patrick's raised \$160,000.

For itself, the parish undertook to raise \$225,000 to modernize the school and begin an auditorium-gymnasium and parish hall. The campaign was eminently successful, but the total cost was nearly twice the amount raised.

Msgr. William J. Brien had made plans contingent on the removal of the high school from parish property into the Mercy Sisters' new Notre Dame High, opened in 1955.

The pastor noted a total pledge of \$262,742 in the drive; and later, a total cost approximating \$429,000. The new building was dedicated in October, 1958, three months after his death.

Msgr. Brien, not yet so titled, came to St. Patrick's after 16 years of high school teaching. He was history chairman at Aquinas Institute when he was appointed, May 10, 1932, and he finished the school term, spending weekends at work in Elmira.

The 26 years of his tenure are described day by day in the journal he kept — meetings, visits, First Communions, retreats — a record of the normal, busy life of an established parish.

Some of the notes are brief as possible, like this one for May 2, 1954:

"Cornerstone at Notre Dame High. I officiated."

In 1940, Our Lady of Lourdes parish was carved out of St. Patrick's and Father Leo G. Schwab was named pastor. He had been Father Brien's assistant from 1918 until 1934, and he lived at St. Patrick's while organizing the new parish.

Noting on July 25, 1940, that he had installed Father Schwab in the new pastorate, Father Brien told of a "unique" operation. During Father Schwab's residence at St. Patrick's, parishioners who would be following him to Lourdes put their Sunday contributions in Lourdes envelopes, for more than a year.

When Msgr. Brien died, June 2, 1958, Father Schwab succeeded him as dean, a position abolished a few years ago.

As pastor, Father Edward J. Waters was chosen. He had been pastor for five years of St. Aloysius in Auburn.

The first diocesan priest to join the Army chaplain corps in World War II, he served more than five years, seeing action in Europe and North Africa and winning a citation for bravery under fire.

He was a native of Owego and prepared for the priesthood in diocesan seminaries.

The third pastor of St. Patrick's was felled by a heart attack

and died Aug. 24, 1958, precisely two months after his appointment. He was 52 years old.

The administration of the parish again was in the hands of the senior assistant, Father Robert Donovan, until Oct. 1, when Father John S. Hayes took over as pastor. He stayed eight years.

Father Hayes, now rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral in Rochester, also was a chaplain, trained in the Army Chaplain School at Harvard. He served with a field artillery unit in General George Patton's Third Army, winning the Bronze Star medal for heroic achievement.

As chaplain at the Veterans' Administration Hospital in Bath, he designed and directed construction of a chapel for handicapped patients. His increased revenue program at St. Patrick's reduced the building debt incurred in 1957 and brought about various improvements in the school.

In Father Joseph M. Egan's time, the matter of school reorganization has been the principle focus of attention for Elmira Catholics.

Recent grammar school consolidations have led to something new for this century-old parish—a city-wide Catholic junior high school, being readied to open in September in the building the first pastor started 78 years ago.

Not all Irish

Any church named St. Patrick's has its roots in the Emerald Isle. All the names in early records of the Elmira parish are notably Irish, and the first pastor himself was a native of Ireland.

Against this background, the second pastor's ancestry was discussed in the parish bulletin last April 11.

Calling attention to the 80th anniversary of Msgr. William J. Brien's birth, April 15, the bulletin note said:

"Particularly after his appointment to St. Patrick's, he was often thought of as an updated O'Brien, but it is not so.

"Monsignor was thoroughly German in his ancestry."



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